

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1.-6. (Canceled)

7. (New) A process for preparing 3-chloro-5-nitrotoluene, which comprises the steps of reacting 2-methyl-4-nitroaniline with t-butylhypochlorite in a neutral condition and in a solvent containing neither an acid or a base to obtain 2-chloro-4-nitro-6-methylaniline and deaminating a reactant mixture containing the 2-chloro-4-nitro-6-methylaniline by adding sodium nitrite to the reactant mixture adjusted to a temperature between room temperature and 0°C, allowing the reaction mixture to stand at an elevated temperature and then decreasing the temperature and maintaining the temperature at 40 to 50°C to obtain 3-chloro-5-nitrotoluene.

8. (New) A process for preparing 3-chloro-5-methylphenylisocyanate, which comprises the steps of reacting 2-methyl-4-nitroaniline with t-butylhypochlorite in a neutral condition to obtain 2-chloro-4-nitro-6-methylaniline and deaminating a reactant mixture containing the 2-chloro-4-nitro-6-methylaniline to obtain 3-chloro-5-nitrotoluene, reducing the 3-chloro-5-nitrotoluene with a reducing agent to obtain a resulting product and reacting the resultant product with triphosgene.

9. (New) The process as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the reducing agent is selected from the group consisting of tin chloride and Raney nickel.

10. (New) The process as claimed in Claim 8, wherein the reaction of 2-methyl-4-nitroaniline with t-butylhypochlorite is carried out in a solvent containing neither acid nor base and the deamination is carried out by adding sodium nitrite to the reactant mixture adjusted to a temperature between room temperature and 0°C, allowing the reaction mixture to stand at an elevated temperature and then decreasing the temperature and maintaining the temperature at 40 to 50°C.